

Immunization Division

Summary of Changes to Immunization Requirements

TDH has made significant changes to the immunization requirements for children attending schools and child-care facilities. These changes will be effective for the 2004-05 school year. Highlights are outlined below.

Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis containing vaccine (DTP/DTaP/DT) Children entering Kindergarten will be required to show proof of five doses of DTP/DTaP/DT. Five doses of DTP/DTaP/DT are required unless the fourth dose was administered on or after the 4th birthday. This change will not require students who had previously complied with the former requirements to receive additional doses of vaccine. For instance, if a student enrolled in Kindergarten last year and he/she had received four doses of DTP/DTaP/DT and one of those doses was on or after the 4th birthday, then that student does not need an additional dose of DTP/DTaP/DT. However, if the student did not receive the fourth dose on or after the 4th birthday, the student will require an additional dose.

Polio Children entering Kindergarten will be required to show proof of four doses of polio vaccine, one of which must have been received on or after the 4th birthday. If a child attended Kindergarten last year and received the third dose on or after the 4th birthday, a fourth dose is not required.

Hepatitis B Students will need to show proof of hepatitis B vaccination by grade level. Beginning in school year 2004-05, students attending Kindergarten through 5th grade and students in 7th through 10th grade will be required to show proof of three doses of hepatitis B vaccine. Subsequent grade levels will be added each school year until school year 2006-07, when all students in all grades (K-12) will be required to show proof of hepatitis B vaccination.

Varicella Students attending Kindergarten through 4th grade and 7th through 10th grade in school year 2004-05, will need to show proof of one dose of varicella vaccine. Subsequent grade levels will be added each school year until school year 2006-07, when all students in all grades (K-12) will be required to show proof of varicella vaccination.

Hepatitis A Students attending schools or child-care facilities in geographic areas designated by the Texas Department of Health ([see attached list](#)) will need to show proof of two doses of hepatitis A vaccine if they are enrolled in a child-care center or if they attend Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Age Ranges Children enrolled in child-care facilities will no longer need to provide proof of vaccination “upon entering an age group.” This change aligns the Texas immunization requirements with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) medical recommendations. For example, a child attending a child-care facility center must now show proof of vaccination against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) anywhere from 12-15 months of age. Therefore, in order for a child to be in compliance with Texas immunization requirements, the child must be vaccinated with one dose of MMR vaccine by 16 months of age.

Provisional Enrollment A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

Furthermore, a subsection relating to homeless students has been added to the provisional enrollment section. This section allows a thirty-day provisional enrollment for homeless students as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act.

Acceptable Evidence of Vaccination Acceptable documentation now includes records generated from a local health authority, such as a registry, or from school officials from another state.

Exclusions from Compliance The immunization requirements now include an exemption from immunizations for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. This change was a result of House Bill 2292 passed by the 78th Legislature and became effective on September 1, 2003. To claim exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the child's parent or legal guardian must present a signed affidavit form to the school. The affidavit will be valid for a **two-year** period.

Written requests must be submitted through the U.S. Postal Service, commercial carrier, fax, or by hand-delivery to:

TDH Bureau of Immunization & Pharmacy Support
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

Affidavit form requests will be processed and mailed within one week from the receipt of the request. The letter must include the following information:

- Full name of each child for whom a form is requested (first, middle, and last);
- Date of birth of each child for whom a form is requested;
- Parent or legal guardian's complete return mailing address, including zip code; and
- Number of forms needed for each child (not to exceed five forms per child)

For more information on immunization requirements, please contact the Immunization Division at (512) 458-7284, or visit our website at www.ImmunizeTexas.com.